

The
Yoga
Manifesto

Brian Dana Akers

The Yoga Manifesto

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Yoga Manifesto

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Brian Dana Akers

YogaVidya.com

YogaVidya.com, PO Box 569, Woodstock NY 12498-0569 USA

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First edition

Ⓢ The paper used in this book meets the requirements of the
American National Standards Institute/National Information
Standards Organization Permanence of Paper for Publications
and Documents in Libraries and Archives, ANSI/NISO
Z39.48-1992.

ISBN 978-0-9899966-9-3 (pbk. : alk. paper)

ISBN 978-0-9899966-8-6 (ebk.)

United Kingdom

A catalogue record for this book is available from the
British Library.

United States

A catalog record for this book is available from the
Library of Congress.

Loretta has patience.

To Jeanette, Ardith & Helen

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Yoga and Money

A fundamental attribute of Yoga is that it is FREE. Once you know how to do it, you don't need fancy clothing (anything comfortable will do), special mats (I use a carpet remnant), an awesome room (even florescent lights and linoleum floors will serve), intricate contraptions or props, a vast library, the world's most famous teacher, or an exotic locale. Any small flat space will do. You can do it indoors or outdoors. You can do it clothed or nude. (Probably best if not outdoors *and* nude.) Yoga is FREE.

But since we all live in the highly monetized economies of the twenty-first century, it would be prudent to go through some of the ways to

not lose money from Yoga, to make a small amount of money, to make a lot of money, and to make a stupendous amount of money.

To not lose money, let's first consider what the economists call opportunity costs. If you are spending time and money on Yoga, you are not spending them on something else. Your alternative courses of action could be more or less lucrative, more or less costly, more or less enjoyable, more or less healthy, more or less moral. Since Yoga is good for you in so many ways, the chances are high that the opportunity costs are low. But Yoga is not for everyone, so at some point, you may feel it's best for you to stop and try something else.

A second cost to consider is teacher training courses. I took a six-week TTC in 1976 with a direct disciple of Sivananda. It was a wonderful experience. But TTCs can be surprisingly expensive, and they graduate far, far more teachers than there are teaching positions. It is very unlikely there will be a salaried,

full-time-with-benefits position waiting for you, and much more likely that you will need to piece together classes here and there as a freelancer.

Third, avoid cults and scams. They can ruin your life and drain your bank balance. More on this in the next chapter.

To save a small amount of money with Yoga, the most important consideration is the least amenable to calculation, namely the health benefits. Yoga will almost certainly improve your health and well-being, but there is no way of knowing what your health and well-being would've been without it. It's definitely a positive—maybe large, maybe small.

A common way to make a small amount of money is to start a small business—your own Yoga studio, a YouTube channel, hawking merchandise, and so on. You might make it big, but the odds are you will remain small or go out of business. I can tell you from my own experience that publishing meticulous bilingual Sanskrit-English editions of the classic Yoga texts is

not the road to easy riches. It's more like conducting trench warfare with a tablespoon. To be more specific, Ingram, the world's largest wholesaler of books, offers over 1300 editions of the *Bhagavad Gita*. It's Gresham's Law on steroids. The type of Yoga books that have sold well to date are the full-color anatomy manuals with cutaway asana illustrations.

To make a lot of money, to be a genuine Yoga millionaire, set yourself up as a guru. You can kick it old school with matted hair, skin smeared with ashes, and sitting on a tiger skin. You can put on a business suit and give Power-Point presentations. You can do anything; nothing is too crazy. Books, magazines, DVDs, t-shirts, essential oils; lectures, classes, intensives, retreats, initiations; levels of membership, tithing, a global network of ashrams—the opportunities are endless. A sideline of Ayurvedic products is often quite successful. Word to the wise: Don't lose your soul.

To pick just one of many, many examples,

take a subset of asanas, turn up the heat to 105 degrees Fahrenheit, flog the hell out of it, and then buy yourself a dozen Rolls-Royces. That's Bikram Yoga.

To make a stupendous amount of money, to be a genuine Yoga billionaire, I really know of only one way, and that's to design, make, and market stretchy clothes that give a woman a nice-looking ass. Lululemon is the best example. Multiply the price-per-share times the number of shares outstanding and you'll see that LULU (its ticker symbol) has a market capitalization of tens of billions of dollars. It is one of the 500 most valuable companies in the world. And LULU has many competitors. (One of them is even named Hard Tail, just in case the purpose of these clothes is not clear enough for you.)

Speaking of billionaires, you may have heard of the Koch (rhymes with "coke") brothers and their privately held conglomerate, Koch Industries. They like to invest in products fundamental to our modern way of life, but not directly

facing the consumer. Lycra (also known generically as Spandex and other names), the basic stretchy material that goes into Yoga pants, was invented by DuPont in 1958. DuPont sold Lycra to Koch Industries in 2003, and Koch still retains a minority interest.

So woke, but also Koch.

(The clothes are also difficult to recycle.)

न वेषधारणं सिद्धेः कारणं न च तत्कथा ।

क्रियैव कारणं सिद्धेः सत्यमेतन्न संशयः ॥

Success is achieved neither by wearing the right clothes nor by talking about it. Practice alone brings success. This is the truth, without a doubt.

You have just read chapter two of *The Yoga Manifesto*. Go to YogaVidya.com to learn more.

Feel free to share this with your friends and colleagues.

Author

BRIAN DANA AKERS began practicing Yoga at age twelve, learning Sanskrit at seventeen, and working in publishing at twenty-three. You can find out more about him at brianakers.com.



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ISBN 978-0-9899966-9-3



5 1495



9 780989 996693